58. The language learning system of claim 57, wherein the selection pane is adapted to enable a user to view a selected character and a selected letter of the phoneme selector.

59. The language learning system of claim 58, where the body is formed in the shape of a cone.--

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office action mailed December 31, 2001. Applicant initially thanks the Examiner for the telephone interview on February 25, 2002, and notes that claim 1 has been amended consistent with the conversations in this interview.

Turning initially to the claim objections, applicant has amended claim 2 as suggested.

Turning now to the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, applicant notes that the structural features encompassed by the phrase "pronunciation symbol" in claims 1, 3, 10, 25, and 30-33 are shown at 40 in the drawings, and described throughout the specification, and thus the term is not indefinite. Claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 4, correcting the antecedent basis issue raised by the Examiner. Regarding claim 7, the structural features encompassed by the phrases "fictional characters" and "having a given name" (since amended to "having a character name") are shown at 42 and 48, respectively, in the figures and described throughout the specification, and thus the terms

are not indefinite. Regarding claim 13, the structural features encompassed by the phrase "a vessel" in claim 13 is shown in Figs. 13 and 14 at 54 and described throughout the specification, and thus is not indefinite. The antecedent basis issues raised by the Examiner for claims 20 and 21 have been corrected, while the antecedent basis issue raised for claim 33 is moot, since claim 33 has been cancelled, without prejudice. Claim 22 has been amended to read "configured to display," and now is definite. Regarding claims 23, 26 and 31-33, the term "name" is shown at 48 in the figures and described throughout the specification, and thus the term is definite.

Turning now to the rejections under § 102 and 103, applicant has amended claim 1 consistent with the conversation between the undersigned and the examiner on February 25, 2002. As discussed in the interview, none of the prior art of record discloses or suggests the claimed limitations. Thus, applicant believes that claim 1, and dependent claims 2-6, are allowable.

Applicant has amended claims 7 and 32 in a manner similar to claim 1, to additionally require a pronunciation symbol that is separate from the letter, which indicates a pronunciation for the letter as it is positioned in the name of the character. None of the prior art of record discloses or suggests this feature in combination with the other claimed features of claims 7 and 32, and therefore claims 7 and 32 are believed allowable. Claims 8-24, which depend from claim 7, are thus also believed allowable.

Applicant submits new claims 34-59, directed to different aspects of the present invention.

As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, applicants have provided a separate

marked-up version of the amended claims showing the changes relative to the previous version of those claims (attached).

The above amendments and remarks are believed to address fully the Examiner's rejections, and place the application in condition for allowance. A prompt indication of the same respectfully is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned if any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephonic interview.
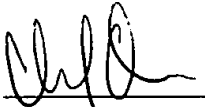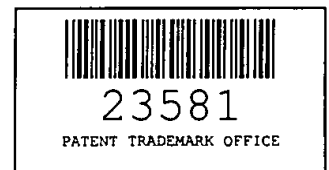
Respectfully submitted,
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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 10, 25-31, and 33, without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 19, 20, 22, 24, and 32, as follows.

1.   (Amended)   A language learning system, comprising:

a body;

a plurality of phoneme selectors coupled to the body, each phoneme selector including a letter, a character, and a pronunciation symbol separate from the letter, the pronunciation symbol indicating a pronunciation for the letter, all associated with a phoneme, the character having a name including the phoneme; and

a target window positioned in the body, the target window being configured to display a target;

wherein the plurality of selectors are configured to be adjustable by a user to spell a name of the target

wherein the pronunciation symbol instructs a user how to pronounce the letter as the letter is positioned in the name of the target.

2.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim 1, wherein [the] each selector is wheel-shaped.

5. (Amended) The language learning system of claim [1] 4, wherein the selection pane is adapted to enable a user to view a selected character, a selected pronunciation symbol and/or a selected letter of the phoneme selector.

7. (Amended) A language learning system, comprising:

a set of [fictional] characters, each character being associated with a predetermined phoneme of a language, and having a [given] character name including the phoneme; and

a learning device configured to display at least one of the characters along with an associated letter and pronunciation symbol corresponding to the phoneme, wherein the pronunciation symbol is separate from the letter and instructs a user how to pronounce the letter as the letter is positioned in the name of each character.

9. (Amended) The language learning system of claim 8, wherein each character and associated pronunciation symbol and letter are arranged radially on one of a plurality of character regions on the wheel.

12. (Amended) The language learning system of claim 11, wherein the letter and pronunciation symbol [and character] are positioned on [adjacent] a first side[s] of the block adjacent a second side of the block featuring the character.

14. (Amended) The language learning system of claim 13, wherein the letter and pronunciation symbol [and the character] are positioned on an opposite side[s] of the

vessel _from the character_.

19.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim 7, wherein the learning device is a computerized learning device having a display configured to display the character, _pronunciation symbol,_ and letter.

20.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim [17] _19_, wherein the computerized learning device includes a speaker configured to emit an audio signal containing a pronunciation corresponding to the phoneme of the character, _pronunciation symbol,_ and letter on the display.

21.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim [17] _19_, wherein the computerized learning device is configured to present an audio or visual target for the user to spell.

22.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim 7, wherein the learning device is a computerized learning device configured to _display_ the character, _pronunciation symbol,_ and letter on a selector chosen from the group consisting of a wheel, block, vessel, card, doll, disk, and cone.

24.   (Amended)   The language learning system of claim 7, wherein the letter _and_ _pronunciation symbol_ associated with the character [is] _are_ printed on a body of the

character.

32. (Amended) A language learning system, comprising:

(a) at least one substrate;

(b) at least one character disposed on said substrate and having a name formed of one or more letters of an alphabet of a language;

(c) at least one letter of the alphabet of the language disposed on said substrate and being the same as one or more of the letters of the alphabet of the language forming said name of said character; and

(d) at least one pronunciation symbol of the language disposed on said substrate which corresponds to the pronunciation of said at least one letter of the alphabet of the language of said system, wherein the pronunciation symbol is separate from the letter and instructs a user how to pronounce the letter as the letter is positioned in the name of the character.